

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system of finding and serving information pertaining to a particular product on the Internet, said system comprising:

5 URL/UPN information storage means for storing information representative of (i) a plurality of universal product numbers (UPNs) assigned to a plurality of products, and (ii) a plurality of URLs symbolically linked to said plurality of UPNs, each said URL specifying the location of an information resource located on the Internet related to a particular one of said products;

request servicing means for servicing a request made by a client system, for information about one of said plurality of products located on the Internet, wherein said request is transmitted to said Internet database server and includes information representative of the UPN assigned to said product;

product-related information storage means for storing information related to said plurality of products; and

information delivery means, responsive to said request servicing means, for serving to said client system, information related to one of said plurality of products specified by the URL symbolically linked to the UPN included in said request made by said client system.

20 2. The system of claim 1, wherein said UPN assigned to each said product is a unique Uniform Product Code (UPC) number assigned to said product.

3. The system of claim 1, which further comprises said client system, wherein said client system includes a Internet browser program having an on-screen product finder button which, when selected, results in a dialogue box requesting that the UPN associated with said request be entered into said client system.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein said product related information is of a multi-media nature.

5. A method of finding and serving information pertaining to a particular product on the Internet, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) storing information representative of (i) a plurality of universal product numbers (UPNs) assigned to a plurality of products, and (ii) a plurality of URLs symbolically linked to said plurality of UPNs, each said URL specifying the location of an information resource located on the Internet related to a particular one of said products;

(b) storing information related to said plurality of products;

(c) transmitting a request from a client system, for information about one of said plurality of products located on the Internet, wherein said request includes information representative of the UPN assigned to said product; and

(d) responding to said transmitted request and serving to said client system, information related to one of said plurality of products specified by the URL symbolically linked to the UPN and included in said request made by said client system.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said UPN assigned to each said product is a unique Uniform Product Code (UPC) number assigned to said product.

5 7. The method of claim 5, wherein step (c) comprises:

selecting a on-screen product finder button displayed by an Internet browser program running on said client system, whereupon a dialogue box is displayed requesting that the UPN associated with the requested product be entered; and

entering said UPN into said dialogue box.

8. A system of finding and serving information pertaining to a particular product on the Internet, said system comprising:

URL/trademark information storage means for storing information representative of (i) a plurality of trademarks used in connection with a plurality of products, and (ii) a plurality of URLs symbolically linked to said plurality of trademarks, each said URL specifying the location of an information resource located on the Internet related to a particular one of said products;

request servicing means for servicing a request made by a client system, for information about one of said plurality of products located on the Internet, wherein said request is transmitted to said Internet database server and includes information representative of the trademark used in connection with said product; and

product-related information storage means for storing information related to said plurality of products; and

information delivery means, responsive to said request servicing means, for serving to said client system, information related to one of said plurality of products specified by the URL symbolically linked to the trademark included in said request made by said client system.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein each said trademark is registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office in conjunction with said product .

10. A method of finding and serving information pertaining to a particular product on the Internet, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) storing information representative of (i) a plurality of trademarks used in connection with a plurality of products, and (ii) a plurality of URLs symbolically linked to said plurality of trademarks, each said URL specifying the location of an information resource located on the Internet related to a particular one of said products;

(b) storing information related to said plurality of products;

(c) transmitting from a client system, a request for information about one of said plurality of products located on the Internet, wherein said request includes information representative of the trademark used in connection with said product ; and

(d) responding to said transmitted request, and serving to said client system, information related to one of said plurality of products specified by the URL symbolically linked to the trademark and included in said request made by said client system.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein each said trademark is registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office in conjunction with said product .

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12. The method of claim 10, wherein step (c) comprises:

selecting an on-screen product finder button displayed by an Internet browser program running on said client system, whereupon a dialogue box is displayed requesting that the trademark and/or company name associated with the requested product be entered; and

entering said trademark and/or company name into said dialogue box.

13. An Internet-based consumer product information delivery system comprising:

means for enabling manufacturers and their agents to link (i.e. relate), manage and update within a database, the UPC (and/or UPC/EAN) numbers on their products and the Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) of HTTP-encoded documents containing particular kinds of consumer product-related information published on the Internet by said manufacturers, their agents and/or third parties; and

means for enabling consumers, in retail stores, at home, in the office and on the road, to access said consumer product-related information from said database, using said UPC (and/or UPC/EAN) numbers and/or by scanning UPC (or UPC/EAN) bar code symbols encoded with said numbers.

14. A consumer product information finding system comprising:

at least one kiosk installed within a retail shopping environment and each said kiosk includes

5 a bar code symbol reader for reading the UPC (or UPC/EAN) numbers on consumer products being offered for sale in the store, and

a LCD touch-type display screen for displaying product-related information accessed from hyper-linked Web-sites on the Internet.

15. The consumer product information finding system of claim 14, wherein said bar code symbol reader projects a 3-D laser scanning pattern over said LCD touch-screen panel.

16. The consumer product information finding system of claim 14, wherein said kiosk further comprises a telephone handset for carrying out telephone calls.

17. The consumer product information finding system of claim 14, wherein said kiosk further comprises a credit card transaction terminal for conducting consumer purchase transactions and other forms of electronic commerce while using said consumer product information finding system.

18. The consumer product information finding system of claim 14,

wherein said bar code symbol reader has a cordless interface with said kiosk so that it may be moved about within said retail environment in a portable manner.

- 5 19. A method of providing consumer product information to consumers in retail stores, at home, in the office or on the road, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) enabling manufacturers and their agents to link (i.e. relate), manage and update within a database, the UPC (and/or UPC/EAN) numbers on their products and the Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) of HTTP-encoded documents containing particular kinds of consumer product-related information published on the Internet by said manufacturers, their agents and/or third parties; and

(b) enabling consumers, in retail stores, at home, in the office or on the road, to access said consumer product-related information from said database, using said UPC (and/or UPC/EAN) numbers and/or by scanning UPC (or UPC/EAN) bar code symbols encoded with said numbers.